

April 11, 2003

METH SUMMIT

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem today announced that he and United States Attorney Drew Wrigley are presenting a joint summit in Fargo May 19-21, 2003, focusing on methamphetamine (meth) in North Dakota.

The three-day summit will offer training and education opportunities to law enforcement officers, treatment and addiction counselors, teachers and prosecutors, and will address a variety of topics ranging from detection of meth and detoxification of addicts, to education and community prevention strategies.

“Every day, law enforcement officers raid a meth lab somewhere in the state. So far this year there have been 114 meth lab busts, almost double what we saw last year. Our efforts are just exposing the tip of the problem,” said Stenehjem. “The legislature passed a package of bills designed to toughen the state's anti-drug laws and curb the alarming increase of meth labs. However, we recognize that the most effective approach to reversing this trend is to combine enforcement with effective treatment and prevention programs. This summit is the next phase in our efforts.”

United States Attorney Drew Wrigley commented, “Meth does not respect jurisdictional boundaries. We must all work together for our efforts to be successful. The summit is an opportunity for professionals in many fields to gain an insight into the involvement of other jurisdictions, and discover new resources to combat meth.”

Richard Sanders, US DEA Special Agent in Charge, Chicago, and George Hood, US DEA Director of Training in Chicago will give keynote speeches.

Nationally acclaimed speaker, Dr. Michael Sise, will present the opening session, “Code Trauma, Meth and Death.” An emergency room physician and Trauma Director at Scripps Mercy Healthcare in San Diego, Dr. Sise will share his first hand experiences dealing with meth related traumas.

Other speakers include Chris Hoyt of the US DEA, who will address drug addiction problems specific to the heartland, and Colleen Copple of the National Crime Prevention Council in Washington, DC. Ms. Copple is the Senior Advisor to the President on New Initiatives, and will concentrate on community prevention strategies.

In addition to the general sessions, conference attendees will be able to attend continuing education sessions designed to focus on meth from different perspectives. These sessions identify and track the problems associated with meth from beginning to end, covering prevention, detection of meth labs, detoxification of addicts, prosecution of meth cases, and rehabilitation and treatment needs of addicts.

Sponsors of the summit are:

- Basin Electric Power Cooperative
- Rural Crime & Justice Center Minot State University
- Touchstone Energy Cooperatives
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota
- Odyssey Research, Inc.
- ND POST Board
- ND Peace Officers Association
- ND Newspaper Association
- The North Dakota Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians
- Cellular One

Stenehjem said, "We are fortunate that so many of our corporate citizens recognize the serious nature of this devastating drug. These sponsors will help make the summit a rewarding experience for all who attend."

Registration and other information for the summit is available from the Attorney General's website at www.ag.state.nd.us.

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